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EDITORIAL PREFACE

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honourable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things

No section of the population of India can afford to neglect her ancient heritage In her literature, philosophy, art, and regulated life there is much that is worthless, much also that is distinctly unhealthy, yet the treasures of knowledge, wisdom, and beauty which they contain are too them, if he is to be a cultured modern Indian This is as true of the Christian, the Muslim, the Zoroastrian as of the Hindu. But, while the heritage of India has been largely explored by scholars, and the results of their toil are laid out for us in their books, they cannot be said to be really available for the ordinary man. The volumes are in most cases expensive, and are often technical and difficult. Hence this series of cheap books has been planned by a group of Christian men, in order that every educated Indian, whether rich or poor, may be able to find his way into the treasures of India's past. Many Europeans, both in India and elsewhere, will doubtless be glad to use the series

The utmost care is being taken by the General Editors in selecting writers, and in passing manuscripts for the press. To every book two tests are rigidly applied. everything must be scholarly and everything must be sympathetic. The purpose is to bring the best out of the ancient treasuries, so that it may be known, enjoyed, and used

THE HERITAGE OF INDIA

PSALMS OF MARĀŢHĀ SAINTS

One Hundred and Eight Hymns translated from the Marathi

BY

NICOL MACNICOL, M.A., D.LITT

ASSOCIATION PRESS
5, RUSSELL STREET, CALCUTTA

LONDON OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
NEW YORK, TORONTO, WELBOURNE,
BOMBAY, AND MADRAS



VITHORY OF TANDHALPUR

THE HERITAGE OF INDIA

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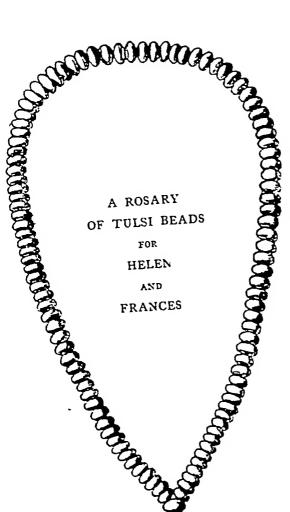
NICOL MACNICOL, MA., D.LITT.

AUIHOR OF "INDIAN THEISM"

ASSOCIATION PRESS
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PREFACE

This collection contains translations of one hundred and eight poems by some of the chief Vaisnavite poets of the Maratha country. The number seemed not inappropriate in view of the fact that there are one hundred and eight tulsi beads on the rosary worn by the Vaisnavite devotee. Almost every one of these poems is a prayer, a cry of the saint to the god of his worship

It has not been an easy matter to decide which poems should be selected for translation. Some have been chosen because they have a place in the regular worship of the devotees, as repeated daily by the Vārkarīs or adherents of the Pandharpur sect or sung in their bhajans or song services But it was not easy to make a selection from so immense a body of literature as these poets have pro-I accordingly applied to Sir R G Bhandarkar with a request that he would assist me in making a choice, and he most kindly responded by furnishing me with a list of fifty abhangs of Tukārām from those which he uses for his daily and weekly religious exercises. To anyone who knows Sir Ramkrishna Bhandarkar as not only a great Oriental scholar but the outstanding representative in India to-day of the ancient school of bhakts, the fact that these psalms minister nourishment to a spiritual life so beautiful and so sincere is in itself sufficient testimony to their religious value. For him, as for these saints, the life of the spirit is the only life livable, and fellowship with God its purpose and its goal. When one has known Sir Ramkrishna Bhandarkar the religion of these saints ceases to be of merely antiquarian interest. He is one of them still left among us for our reverence, and the strength and purity and tenderness of their devotion live again in him

To other friends as well I have to acknowledge a deep debt of gratitude I am very conscious of my own limitations as a student of the Marathi language how easy it is to misunderstand an allusion or to misinterpret a phrase in these poems. Ideas their authors are born to, and live by, we of the West grasp only with an effort For that reason a foreigner's renderings must often be very imperfect. Mine would be much more imperfect even than they are, were it not for the kindness of two friends, Professor W B Patwardhan, of the Fergusson College, Poona, and Dr V A Sukhtankar, of Indore They have both read the proofs and have given me many criticisms and suggestions I have to acknowledge with much gratitude this help. I have tried to improve the translations in many instances in accordance with their suggestions, but I am well aware that I have not by any means succeeded in removing all their defects however, this little book awakens a wider interest in a little-known company of sincere singers and in their religion of passionate longing for the divine fellowship, I shall feel richly rewarded

Poona, August, 1919

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INTRODUCTION

THE period of the Maratha renaissance, during which the great poets and saints of Mahārāstra flourished. extends from the thirteenth to the seventeenth century This literary revival found its impulse in a awakening. It is indeed appropriate to call the poets of this period psalmists, because their most characteristic. certainly their most popular, work consisted of lyrical utterances, called abhangs, which usually express religious longing or describe religious experience. whose work is represented in this volume were Vaisnavites, adherents of the bhakts sect, whose members, while they are to be found at many different periods and in many different districts of India, and while they worshipped a variety of deities, are united in seeking to reach God by the path of blights, or loving devotion. Most of these saints were at the same time, according to the tradition, ardent devotees of Vithoba of Pandharpur. How the shrine of this god became the high place of bhakts worship in the Marāthā country we cannot now tell It is sufficient to say that around it and its god, Vithoba or Vitthal, whosename is believed by some scholars to be a corruption of Visnu and who is identified with Krisna, has gathered for many centuries the devotion of a great company worshippers, who come there on pilgrimage singing songs Those saints who in their lives centuries ago had been devoted to the god are still borne in palankins. in which are placed models of their holy footprints, to the presence of Vithoba in this village on the river Bhima

> On Bhima's banks all gladness is In Pandhari, abode of bliss

This is the refrain of many a song that is re-echoed by the choirs of singers that journey with eager expectation

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On Blumi's banks all gladness is In Pandhan, abode of bliss

This is the refrain of many a song that is re-echoed by the choirs of singers that journey with eager expectation year by year, to this Deccan village to look upon the face

of the god

There is little outwardly to distinguish the worship at this shrine from that of a hundred others throughout the The image is rudely fashioned and has no grace of form 1 The worship is that which is commonly performed in any Hindu temple. What gives it its distinctive character is the special song-services, the kirtans and bhajans that are conducted for the instruction of pilgrims, and in which their deep religious emotion finds its fullest utterance Great numbers of pilgrims sit for hours at Pandharpur and the other village centres of the cult, listening to the exhortations of some famous preacher or Haridas, who bases his discourse upon verses from such poet-saints as Jñandev or Ekanath or Tukaram With the teaching is skilfully combined the singing of a choir These kirtans have a profound emotional effect upon the multitudes gathered in eager expectation at the holy place The songs of the old saints awaken, and in some degree satisfy, the deep desires of their hearts. So also groups will gather for what are called bhajans, when there is no preaching but they continue often for hours singing those songs of longing and of ecstacy

It would be easy to show that this religious and intellectual awakening was part of a movement widely spread throughout India. It is, however, only with the Marāthā poet saints that we are here concerned. In its influence upon all strata of society this movement, in the opinion of Mr M G Ranade, was far more powerful than the corresponding movement in northern and eastern India. Certainly its leaders were drawn from every class, from the highest to the humblest. "Roughly speaking," says Mr Ranade in his Rise of the Marāthā Power, "we may state that the history of the religious revival in Maharāsṣṭra covers a period of nearly five hundred years, and during this period some fifty saints and prophets flourished in this land who left their mark upon the country and its people A few of these saints were women, a few were Muham-

madan converts to Hinduism, nearly half of them were Brāhmans, while there were representatives in the other half from among all the other castes, Marāthās, kunbīs, tailors, gardeners, potters, goldsmiths, repentant prostitutes, and slave girls, even the out-caste Mahārs. From the traditional account of some of these saints, as well as from a study of their voluminous poems, we can form some conception of the character of this remarkable movement.

The earliest of them all, a dimly discerned but powerful figure, is a Brahman, named Jnanesvar, whose chief work, the Jñānesvarī, can be dated with certainty, having been completed in the year A.D 1290 "Jñāneśvar's influence," says Mr Ranade, "has been greater than that of any other Marāthā sādhu (saint) except Tukārām Jñanesvar appeals to the pantheistic tendencies of our people's intellect, while the charm of Tukaram Namdev lies in their appeal to the heart and in the subjective truth of the experiences felt by them in common with all who are religious by nature " To the common people the author of the Jnancsvari is little more than the shadow of a great name, but it is a name that is linked with that of Tukārām in the songs that they sing as they go on pilgrimage to the shrine at Pandharpur As they go they chant two names in chorus, as the names of the chief prophets of their faith, "Jñānobā, Tukārām; Jñānobā, Tukārām " These two, the one in the thirteenth and the other in the seventeenth century, may, with Namdey. whom we may place between them in the fourteenth century, be taken as representative in their life and in their influence of the whole of this social and religious quickening in the Maratha country. From the traditional accounts of these saints—even though these are largely legendary and unreliable—as well as from the specimens of their voluminous poems that are translated here, we may be able to form some conception of the character of this remarkable movement

The life of Jñānesvar is surrounded by many obscurities. Much controversy has centred round the question whether there were not really two Jñānesvars, the one the author

of the Jñanesvari and the Amrit Anubhav-both of them poems of a philosophical or theological character-the other the author of abhangs or short lyrics, the utterances of a much more popular and personal religion. The question is one which cannot be investigated here, but it must be admitted that the hypothesis that there were really two of the name resolves some difficulties which the traditional history undoubtedly presents If, however, we accept the traditional account, this Brahman poet belonged to Alandi, a village twelve miles north of Poona father had come there when on pilgrimage and had married a woman of the place, but, presently, he resumed his wandering, and proceeded to Benares He spent some time there under the instruction of a guru, or spiritual teacher, but presently the sannyāsī, in defiance of religious law and usage, resumed his family duties and returned to Alandi Three sons and a daughter were born to him, but when this grave irregularity of conduct was known he was excommunicated The persecution that he and his wife had to endure is said to have caused them to commit suicide, but their inheritance of trouble passed to the children, who suffered much at the hands of Brāhmans

Jñānesvar's two brothers, Nivrittināth, who was the eldest of the family, and Sopāndev, and his sister, Muktābāī, are all said to have been, like himself, saints and poets. Some of the legendary tales that have been handed down furnish indications of the conflict with Brāhmanical authority and orthodoxy, which evidently centred around these "sainyāsī's children". Jñānesvar is said to have confounded his Brāhman persecutors by causing a buffalo to recite the Vedas, though these are scriptures that only the twice-born may read. He is alleged, on another occasion, to have gone riding on a wall to meet a famous Brāhman yogī and miracle-worker, who, to impress young heretics, was approaching him riding on

a tiger with a snake for a whip

The work upon which Jnanesvar's same chiesly rests is the Jranest ari, a free and copious paraphrase in Marathi verse of the Bragar a square. The seven hundred slokas of

the Gita are here expanded into ten thousand verses. This poem forms, perhaps, the most important work in all Marathi literature, and has exercised a unique influence both upon the thought and upon the language of Maha-The fact that Jnanesvar used the people's language to convey thoughts hitherto concealed in Sanskrit and so reserved for the learned, was in itself an indication that a new religious spirit was abroad What he did for Marathi has been compared to what Dante did for Italian loved the "national Marathi speech," and showed how it could convey sweet sounds and "clear thoughts like moonlight," and how in his verse "lotus flowers spring up in such abundance." "All the weight and distinction that the Marathi language possesses," says Mr. M G Ranade. "it owes to Jnanesvar .. To realize the depth of meaning that is contained in the language one must study the Jñāneśvarī "

The tradition affirms that Jnanesvar, like most of the Marathi school of bhakts, was a devotee of Vithoba of Pandharpur. It is strange, therefore, to find no mention of this god in either the Inanesvari, or his other philosophical poem, the Amrit Anubhav Perhaps it may have been another and later poet of the same name who is the author of these shorter songs or psalms, and who is linked in the legend with the next notable saint of the succession This is Namdey, the author of many simple and passionate lyrics that give expression to varying phases of an ardent devotion to the god of Pandharpur. The language of Namdev's verses is much more modern than that of the Inanesveri, so that, though the tradition gives his date as from 1270 to 1350, the probabilities are that Sir R G. Bhandarkar is right in placing him a century later. was born in a village near Karhad, in the Satara District How it came about that Namdev's heart turned with such passionate adoration to Vilhoba is somewhat obscure. According to one account he bore, like many other saints, from his infancy the marks of sainthood. The first word he spoke was "Śrī Vitthal", he learned nothing at school, for he cared for nothing but kirturs (services of song). That is one way in which saints are made, but another is the way of conversion, and there seems to be more authority for the story that Nāmdev was converted from an evil life to service of Vithobā ¹ Several abhangs—among others one said to be by his wife—refer to an early career of lawlessness brought to a sudden end by his contrition at the tears shed by a woman whom he had made a widow. In his remorse he would have taken his own life in the temple of Nāgnāth, but he found comfort and forgiveness when he sought instead the presence of the more gracious Vithobā, and from that day onward he gave himself with

complete devotion to the worship of this god

The chief religious interest in Namdev's life lies in tracing a change or development in his thought which his abhangs reveal At first he is the purely emotional bhakta, all tears and cries and raptures Later in his life, however, he seems to have passed through an experience which greatly altered his outlook on the world. In the first stage of his experience Vithoba of Pandhari is the sole object of his devotion, he can scarcely tear himself away from the precincts of his temple. At a later period Vithoba has become for him no more than a symbol of the supreme soul that pervades the universe He is still a bhakta, but he is no longer visited by the gusts of passion that had once shaken his soul An attitude of spiritual indifference is now his supreme attainment. His faith rests upon a philosophical interpretation of the universe, which blunts the sensations which formerly harassed him and brings him, if not peace, at least passivity This change, or growth, is reflected in his abhangs, which have not, of course, come down to us in their historical setting or in the order of their composition

One of the members of Nāmdev's household has also a place among the Marāthā poet saints. This is a Sudra woman, named Janabāī, who, according to the story, became a domestic slave of the poet because of her admiration of his devotion. She spent her whole life in his service and Vithobā's. The god is declared in the legend to have been

¹ There is curious confirmation of this in the recently discovered and very early book Lild Caritra, a scripture of the interesting sect of Minbhala

constantly in her company, grinding corn for her, drawing water, helping her to wash the clothes. It is not always clear, however, whether the abhangs do not really describe, not a personal relationship of communion, but a recognition of the divine immanence in all things. When she says that, "in the inner shrine of contemplation Pandurang comes to meet us and clasps us to his breast," it is difficult to believe that she is not describing an experience of spiritual fellowship. But when she says, referring to the household occupations,

Grinding, pounding—this our game, Burn we up all sin and shame,

there is here more than a suspicion of advaita doctrine. She is reaching beyond the māyā, the "sport," of life and its duties to an identity with Brahman beyond the distinction of good and evil. This is fully unveiled in another abhang, which, after expressing a feeling that has all the appearance of being parallel to that daily comradeship with Christ which Christian saints have ever sought, betrays itself in its conclusion as no more than a meta-

physical affirmation of identity with the All

The new knowledge that he attained and the changed outlook that it brought to him are expressed in his prayer to Vithoba. "Let me see thy face with my eyes everywhere and let all creatures be my friends." He has not ceased to follow blakts, but it is no longer with the simplicity of his early love. Far more difficult than to empty the sea or to measure the sky is "the bhakt: of Kesav," for it requires that all sense of "I" and "thou" shall utterly disappear. "Ah, God, a single atom of distinction is huge as Mount Meru" So also the bhakta must realize that God is in all creatures, there must be no love of the flesh. no attachment to the things of sense He must pass beyond good and evil, beyond love and hate, beyond all storms and tempests into the quiet of passivity. Vithoba is now the one real God to him, but not in the sense, as formerly he had thought, that all other gods are false and that he dare not look upon them but only on the idol of Vithoba.

¹ No XXIV, on pp 49f

He is the sole-existent Brahman with "thousands of worlds in every hair" Nāmdev's denunciations of idolatry in his abhangs may be as much inspired by the contempt of the philosopher as by the theistic temper that Muhammadanism was beginning at this time to introduce to India Not only, however, does he denounce idolatry and, like Jñāneśvar, the gross, popular worships. He brushes aside, in a fashion that would hardly be possible had he come under the influence of the author of the Jñāneśvarī, the authority of the sacred scriptures. "Do not study the Vedas," he says, "needless is scriptural instruction Repeat the praises of the Name."

Nămdev obtained samādhs at the age of eighty, and is buried at the great door of the temple of Vithobă at Pandharpūr Whoever enters to look upon the face of the god, to whom he rendered such intense devotion, must step across the place where the saint lies buried. Thus he remains still, as it were, a stepping stone to the

presence of Vithoba

But of all the Maratha bhaktas the greatest in the popular estimation, certainly the widest in the extent of his influence, is Tukārām He was a contemporary of the Maratha national hero, Sivaji, and it can scarcely be questioned that, by the work that he accomplished in drawing together by means of a common religious enthusiasm all classes of the community, he contributed to the formation under that leader of a Maratha kingdom sufficiently strong and united to resist with success the power of the Mogul Empire The popularity of his verses has continued undiminished until to-day, and they are so widely known among all classes of Marathas that many of them have almost come to have the vogue and authority of proverbs They are more familiar throughout Mahārāṣṭra than are (or were) in Scotland "the psalms of David or the songs of Burns" Not only are they prized by the most illiterate worshipper of Vithobā as the "Veda" of their sect, but they furnish a large portion of the psalmody of the reforming Prarthana Samaj, while some of the greatest of modern Indians, such as M G Ranade and Sir R G Bhandarkar, have found in them, perhaps

more than in the ancient scriptures, nourishment for

their own religious life

Tukārām was a Śūdra grain-seller and was born in 1608 at Dehū, a village about eighteen miles north-west of Poona He had an inherited interest in the god, Vithoba, for his family for at least seven generations had been devout worshippers of the god and had regularly visited his shrine at Pandharpur One of his abhaings gives an account of the process by which he was drawn from occupation with the world to "lay hold in his heart of the feet of Vithoba." It gives us a glimpse of one of those periods of famine that must have been frequent and terrible in these days. It brought him, he says, to poverty and shame and sorrow. One of his two wives perished, and he lets us hear her dying cry, "Food, food." This experience appears to have been what made him give himself with complete devotion to the service of the god. In another abhang he tells us how a "king of gurus" came to him in a dream, and, giving him the mantra or sacred formula, "Rām, Krisna, Hari," pointed him to "the ship of Pandurang." This mysterious teacher is called Babaji, and he was of the spiritual line of Raghav Caitanya and Kešav Caitanya This may possibly indicate that Tukārām came at some time under the influence of teachers belonging to the Vaisnavite sect founded by Caitanya in Bengal at the beginning of the sixteenth century.

The story of Tukārām shows us a man possessing much unworldly charm of character. His occupation with religion is, indeed, as in the case of Nāmdev, a cause of bitter complaint by his wife. His children can get nothing to eat for their father lives at the temple. There are many tales of his unworldliness, such as how the compassion of the saint—in this respect one of the kin of St. Francis of Assist—for "his little sisters, the birds," made him allow them to have their will of the grain in the corn fields that he was placed in charge of by the farmer who owned them — Another story tells how the birds, recognizing him as "a friend of all the world," perched fearlessly upon him in the temple court. He does not appear to have gone on pilgrimage, reckoning such religious practices

as of no value for the making of men better Jñāneśvar also had condemned them, but he is said, nevertheless, as we have seen, to have conformed in this matter to the established custom. According to a familiar story, Tukārām refused to travel to Benares, but gave those who were going there and would have him join them an unripe gourd, bidding them dip it in the sacred waters of the Ganges and see if thereby it would become sweet to taste.

Tukārām is said to have suffered much persecution from Brāhmans, who saw in this Sudra's popularity as a religious teacher an infringement of their prerogative Their opposition is said to have culminated in a command to him to cast his poems into the river Indrayani, on the bank of which Dehu stands He obeyed, but his god himself intervened and saved them, from destruction Another story, which appears to be of doubtful authenticity and may have been invented to exalt the poet, represents Sivaji as in vain inviting the humble saint to visit his court, and even, under the spell of Tukaram, as proposing himself to quit his kingdom and give himself up to a life of contemplation Tukaram is believed to have been miraculously translated to Vaikuntha-the heaven of Vişnu-in the year 1649 Several early manuscripts of his poems, however, have simply the statement noted on them that in that year on a certain day he "disappeared," or, according to one of them, "he set out for a holy place"

The most authoritative collection of Tukārām's abhangs contains over 4,600 of these poems. This is far short, however, of the number that he is credited with having composed. Nāmdev is said to have enjoined upon him in a dream to produce enough to realize the earlier poet's ambition that the world should possess a hundred crores or one billion abhangs. As a matter of fact, many even of those that are attributed to him are in all probability forgeries for which popularity and authority have been sought by the help of a great name. This, no doubt, has helped to make still more bewildering the inconsistencies of thought that appear in Tukārām's work, as in all the work of these far from logical or systematic thinkers. Nor are

the poems arranged in any chronological order. Any attempt to trace a process of development in the religious ideas they present must accordingly be largely conjectural. As a matter of fact, like so many other Hindu teachers from the days of the risis of the Upamsads, Tukārām is claimed by various religious schools—by theists and by pantheistic monists—as an adherent of their views. To explain his inconsistency, however, it is perhaps sufficient to say that he was a poet and that he was a Hindu.

When we turn to consider the character of the teaching of these poet-saints and of the influence that by work so widely popular they exerted and still exert, the first difficulty that presents itself is this inconsistency, which is written upon every page of their work. No doubt the fact that they were Hindus and therefore inheritors in their blood and in the texture of their thought of that Hinduism which is as much a spirit, a temperament, as a system, goes far to explain their mental adjustment to what appear to us irreconcilable explanations of life and Advasta (non-duality) and bhakti are not so much, we may say, contradictory theories of the universe as varying moods of the Hindu mind Certainly bhakts in large measure was a mood. It was the other half of edvasta, a reaction of the soul, a feast of that heart which advaita had starved It is the deliberate choice, after long loneliness, of the companionship of God and the saints; after silence, of song, after bareness and intellectual austerity, of the rich colours of affection. And yet, because it is a reaction and not the result of a reasoned development, it is apt to lapse back to what it has rebelled against It is not intellectually convinced. It represents a part only of the man and that the part most liable to fluctuations—his emotional life. Advasta is equally partial, and hence, perhaps, the oscillations to and fro that mark their thinking It would be foolish to labour to reduce their teaching to logical consistency. The bhakta has his scasons of warmth and exaltation when the supreme bliss is to have fellowship with the god of his devotion and to be conscious of his love, while at other times

When Tukaram says this he implies that he and those like him looked beyond the idol-Vithoba, "standing on the brick," as he so often describes him-to something greater that the idol symbolized and signified So Namdev repeatedly denounces idolatry "No guru can show me God wherever I go there are stone gods painted red. How can a stone god speak? When will he ever utter speech? My mind is weary of those who say, 'God, god' Everywhere I go they say, 'Worship a stone' He is God whom Nāma beholds in his heart Nāma will never forsake the feet of Krisna" They also will make no terms with the impure and degrading worships that they see around them. The evil cult of Khandoba, the greedy mendicant, the formal and hypocritical priest, the magic worker, all these they deal with in much the same fashion as did Luther and Erasmus with their counterparts in the Christian Church of Europe

As theists the Maratha psalmists oppose what a South Indian follower of bhakts calls "the haughty Vedant creed" Sometimes they admit that the "way of knowledge" is higher than the way of faith, but that the heart has its reasons, to which they feel they must give heed Sometimes they go further, and claim their way as the highest Tukārām in one of his poems describes how those who had chosen the path of Brahma knowledge and looked forward to deliverance from re-birth and to final absorption turn back under his guidance to the bondage of life, because with it they can experience a fellowship with God of which they can have conscious experience 1 He does not wish to be merged in the unconsciousness of Brahman, "like the dew drop in the silent sea " This goal, that so fascinates the Brahman philosopher wearied with the sorrows of existence, has no charm for him Perhaps this is an indication that life had gained a new interest for the people of that age, with the awakening of some sense of brotherhood among men and some hope that there was love for them in the heart of God They want to know, as Jñānesvar says (Jñ VI, 113), "the bliss of affection"

They do not desire even the joys of heaven. Best of all it seems to them to be to remain on earth, in the fellowship of the saints, singing the praises of the god of their devotion. Jñāneśvar in one passage describes such a bhakta and his supreme desire. Tukārām is no less emphatic in his rejection of a union that means unconsciousness and an end to the joy of serving and praising his divine Master: "Advait," he says, "contents me not."

But in the case of every one of these poets, as we have seen, there is a hesitation and ambiguity when they compare these rival blessednesses. "Knowledge" Brokman have a prestige in India that even Tukaram cannot forget, though he knows by his own experience that knowledge is, as he says, "a stringless lute." It is, in fact, as a Christian bhakta had long before declared, "like sounding brass and a clanging cymbal" And yet, Tukārām can hear what Kabīr calls the "unstruck music," and sometimes vields to its subtle fascination "There," says Kabir, who has praised the "bliss of affection" with as rapturous a delight as any Marāthā saint, "the whole sky is filled with sound, and there that music is made without fingers and without strings "2 In fact, they all want both to have and have not. The unitive life draws them with a desire that so many mystical spirits, East and West alike. have felt Not in the monism of Sankarācārya, nor in the dualism that is quite satisfied to remain two, but in a spiritual experience that transcends and includes both is peace to be found.

For only where the one is twain, and where the two are one again. Will truth no more be sought in vain

Hence the instability, the alternate raptures and despairs of these, as of other, mystic seekers. Love alone—a love that is not a blind rapture but is knowledge too—solves the insoluble problem "In the contact of the embrace," says Jñāneśvar, "the two become one naturally" (Jň. V, 133), but they must remain one, not subject to the vacillations of what is a mere sentiment. Sometimes

² No LVI 2 Tagore's Hurdred Poens of Kabir, p. 22

they persuade themselves that even in the silence of the ultimate unity they will be able to hear what one of them Kabir, calls "the music of the forgetting of sorrows"

When one reviews the work of these poets it become evident that the scope of the thought and the desires they express is not wide, nor is there a rich variety in their It is not quite a symphony "on a penny whistle,' but it has much of the simplicity and monotony, as wel as of the freshness and sincerity, that George Meredith suggests when he takes that as the symbol of the first love of youth and the springtime. There are no organ notes here, no full volume of harmonious sound The favourite and most characteristic poetic form made use of by this group of singers is the abhang, a brief utterance of usually from ten to thirty lines, a true cry of the heart. The poems of Kabir and of Sir Rabindranath Tagore appear to he of much the same character They seem to proceed in most cases from some inward experience and are vivid Whether they are cries of longing, or utterances of love and devotion, or endeavours to understand and explain life and destiny, they are never merely decorative in their purpose They are primarily religious and only secondarily and accidentally works of art They are psalms-meant to be sung, not said, and inseparable, for a full appreciation, from their music. No doubt the music helps to make up for an occasional poverty of thought and bareness of language, but it enables them also to mount and soar, and carries their message more surely to its lodgment in the hearer's They are thus true lyrics, and their melancholy music makes more touching still the simple appeal in many of them, of which we might almost say that they "have no language but a cry " Their most frequently expressed desire is that they may reach and rest upon the breast of They express this longing by means of a rich variety of comparisons, of which the most frequent and most touching is that of a child longing for his mother It is, perhaps, significant that this relationship is used by the Hebrew saints as a symbol, not of the soul's yearning for God, but of God's yearning over His children "Can 2

woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, these may forget, yet will not I forget thee." "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you"

It is in these cries of desire that the Maratha singers come nearest to the Hebrew psalmists. It may, perhaps, be maintained with truth that their longing has not the depth and urgency that characterise Hebrew poetry-a depth and urgency that are due to a deeper sense of need The Hebrew cry is "out of the depths" These Hindu saints frequently express a sense of desolation, of weariness in a world of change and sorrow, of loneliness in separation from God. They say, even as the Hebrew does, "Like as the hart panteth for the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God,"3 but they can scarcely be said to know what he experiences when he goes on to say, "All thy waves and thy billows have gone over me " For the same reason, while there are professions of fervent devotion and affection, while occasional experiences of inward bliss in the divine fellowship are described, there is not the deep note of gratitude which is often sounded in the music of Hebrew psalmists They knew little of such an experience as that which is described in the words, "He brought me up out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and he set my feet upon a rock and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth "4 resonant note of thankfulness which throbs in the 103rd Psalm is outside of their knowledge They can venture, on the contrary, to say of these who love God, "God is their debtor now "5 Such an audacity is beyond the reach of the Hebrew or the Christian penitent, unless his conscience of sin and of unworthiness is overlaid with pantheistic speculation as was that of the mediaval mystic, Eckhart, who says of God, "He can as little do without me as I can do without Him."

It is, perhaps, on the whole true to say that the Hindu psalmists give expression to a more purely natural affection,

¹ Isaiah, XLIX, 15 ² Isaiah, LAVI, 12 ² P4 XLII, 1 ⁴ Ps XL, 2, 3. ⁸ No. LXXXVII, p. 81,

one less suffused with moral meaning, than that which we find in the Hebrew psalms They feel in fellowship with God the instinctive satisfaction, as they so often describe it, that a babe feels on his mother's breast Nearness to God is simply their proper element, as water is to a fish If it is the case that the sense of sin is a morbid growth in man's experience, if there is no ground in the truth of things to justify the feeling of separation on the part of a sinful man from a holy God and the demand for a mediator, then these Indian saints have found a nearer and a directer way to God than the Hebrew and Christian penitents But, on the other hand, no one can question the claim that the Hebrews, and far more, of course, the Christians, have from the dark places of their experience described a more gracious and tender aspect of God and are far more sure of His love The god the Hindu aspires towards is capricious in his affection, the relation of love between him and his worshipper is not based on a strong assurance of his unwavering righteousness. This marks a profound difference of tone between the religious experience of the saints of India and of Judea, a difference which really denotes the distinction that formerly was made between natural and revealed religion. There is a strength, a depth, an assurance in the one-in spite of many tremors—that is not in the other. The beauty. the pathos, the charm of Hindu piety, as here expressed, consists in the very earthliness and uncertainty of its eager Hebrew aspiration has its roots in darker depths, but it is met by a revelation—an assurance, that is, that comes to the desiring heart—of God's moral majesty as well as of His grace, which gives it quietness and confidence and strength This assurance—which rises to rapture and triumph in the New Testament-is already present in the psalmists and prophets of the Old Testament with a richness far beyond anything within the compass of the music of these Indian singers At the same time it would be untrue to say that there are not a certain number of expressions of content and of satisfied affection in their songs, or that they have no experience of peace in the divine fellowship Examples of such joy and

satisfaction are to be found especially among the psalms of Tukārām.²

There are other respects, in addition to those which have been noted, in which the deep division between the Hindu and Hebrew psalmists reveals itself, hidden as it is heneath the common need of hearts that are at one in their longing to find rest in God. As the one conceives of God as being beyond everything else a moral Being, while to the other He is still not much more than a pervading presence in nature, without clearly defined moral characteristics, their ideals of the holy life are fundamentally divergent "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord?" says the Hebrew, "Or who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands and a pure heart: who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity nor sworn deceitfully. He that walketh uprightly and worketh righteousness and speaketh truth in his heart.... whose eyes a vile person is condemned, but he honoureth them that fear the Lord He that sweareth to his hurt and changeth not. He that putteth not out his money to usury, nor taketh reward against the innocent doeth these things shall never be moved."2 as these describe an attitude of practical philanthropy; they recognise the supremacy of moral demands and the claims of duty to one's neighbour. The religion of the Hebrew psalmists is, no doubt, predominantly personal and individual, but the needs of others and responsibility for others are never far from the worshipper's thoughts God is for him the God not merely of the individual worshipper but of at He is also often recognised as the King least the nation over the whole earth, the Judge who will judge the world with rightcousness and the people with equity. things belong to a conception of God and of His relations with men completely different from that of the Indian devotees For them the ideal man is one who has reached a haven of tranquillity.

> No wind of good or ill Shall enter there,

But peace, supremely still, Supremely fair ¹

Equanimity is his supreme quality. He looks with an equal mind upon "a very courteous Brāhman, a dog or an out-caste man" (Bhagavadgītā, v 18). His compassion is measured and controlled, and strong feeling never agitates his soul. In Tukārām's description of the man who is "God's own counterfeit" we have the Indian ideal at its very best, one conscious of duty to others but not urgently or passionately moved to discharge it, more concerned with the cultivation of a placid temper in himself than with the wrongs and sorrows of other men. There is much that is singularly attractive in this picture, especially to those who suffer from the fever and the fret of modern Western life. As described by one who was deeply distressed by the futile agitations of our pursuits, we

Glance and nod and bustle by, And never once possess our souls Before we die

The surge of all anger and passion is to be by the Indian saint most anxiously avoided

Thou pervading Brahman art, How should anger fill thy heart?

"Calm is life's crown," says Tukārām, contradicting by

anticipation Matthew Arnold

It follows inevitably from this difference in the ideal of the holy life and in the conception of the character of God that the Indian saints have no vision of a world judged or a world redeemed. Their horizon is very narrow and limited, and their god is their own personal god—not the nation's or the world's. He is with them most often as a mother with her child or as a bridegroom with the bride—never as a King ruling a people in righteousness, or as a Judge, "the Most High over all the earth." The choice for the Hindu religion seems to he between a provincial or village deity, on the one hand, and a Brahman, on the other, whose rule, if it can be called rule, may extend more

widely, but extends over an empty and silent land, a "wide,

grey, lampless, deep, unpeopled world."

One most noticeable difference between the Indian and the Hebrew psalmists is that the former betray scarcely a trace of the fierce, Hebrew passion of revenge, of the spirit of vindictiveness, the cry for vengeance, that deforms so many of the Biblical psalms. There is nothing in this Indian sacred poetry to correspond to the prayer. "Pour out thy wrath upon the heathen that have not known thee, and upon the kingdoms that have not called upon thy name." Though about the time when these worshippers of Vithoba sang their songs the Muhammadans were invading the land, breaking in pieces their gods and committing, we may be sure, many a crime, there is no cry to God in these poems for vengeance upon them. Namdev refers to these things, but with no anger: he has reached a region of indifference to "A god of stone," he says contemptuously, "and a worshipper who is deceived. . . Such gods were broken in pieces by the Turks. They threw them into the river, as all men know" No doubt they would say to the Muhammadan marauder, as a "holy man" is said to have said to a British soldier who stabbed him in the days of the Mutiny, "And thou, too, art He." All feelings are diluted and all differences, even the difference of right and wrong, are harmonised in a world pervaded by an impersonal, unmoral spirit, likeness to whom-or which—is the highest attainment. This doctrine, we must remember, is behind even the theism of these saints, emptying their hearts of strong passions,-whether the desire for vengeance or the desire for justice, whether the desire to punish evil-doers or to save the perishing. Occasionally Tukaram's heart,-for it certainly is a very tender heart,—feels and recognises the claim that human need makes upon him-

> Can my heart unmoved be, When before my eyes I see Drowning men?—1

but this is a rare mood and very seldom expressed in his poems. His own need and his own concerns absorb him, and it is not his business to call down yengeance upon eyil

doers or to right the world's injustices

What, then, is the essential difference between the religious contribution of the Hebrew and of the Hindu psalmists? The answer is not to be found in the greater intensity of the desire for God or the subtler intellectual insight of the one group of saints or of the other. It is something that reaches deeper in what is beyond all else a moral universe. The Hebrew saints and prophets realised earlier and with a profounder grasp than any other people that it is only the pure in heart that can truly see God, that it is in "mortal, moral strife" that He is alone anght revealed The way of moral progress, of the purging of the eye of the soul that can see God, is not the way of the conscience dulled and deadened and of the heart emptied of feeling. On the contrary, it is by reinforcing the power in man to love righteousness and hate iniquity and by drawing his heart towards holiness that he is brought into any real divine fellowship conscience of the Hebrew psalmist is far from being fully enlightened his personal enemies are often reckoned as God's enemies and his private vendetta given a divine But the Jew is more deeply right than any other people in building everything ultimate in his universe upon the distinction between right and wrong nothing in the world or out of it that is good except a good will " The Hebrew saints built all their dreams and hopes of God and of the eternal world of "stuff o' the conscience." and for that reason they built what has endured

The saints of bhakts not infrequently indeed make moral affirmations that prove them to have had visions of this highway to the presence of God Especially is this true of Tukārām One couplet of his has acquired the familiarity of a proverb among Marāthās, and must have taught them many a lesson of sincerity and straight-

forwardness

He whose words and acts agree, Let his footsteps praised be Still more striking is another passage in which he describes the heart to which God makes Himself known "Pity, patience, calm—that is God's dwelling-place." There is, no doubt, more breadth and exaltation, as well as a profounder sense of human sin and the alienation that it brings, in the Hebrew prophet's declaration, "Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also who is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble and to revive the heart of the contrite one." For he knows, as Tukārām scarcely does, that "the sacrifices of God are a broken heart." It is the tears of penitence, through whose veil alone a sinful man discerns the face of God

¹ Isaiah LVII, 15

THE titles of the selections are in all cases due to the translator Selections I-IV, XXVI and XXVIII are portions extracted from long expository or narrative poems, the names of which are given in the notes All the other selections are short lyrical poems, called abhangs, bearing no title but usually referred to by their opening words There are various kinds of abhangs, some having two lines to a verse, some four One of the commonest rhymes and divides its verse somewhat as is done in No XCVI Another very simple form is almost exactly reproduced in translation No XLIV The six selections mentioned above, which are not abhangs, are in the ovi metre, which has usually a triple rhyme This has been followed in the translations

The last verse of an abhang opens usually with the name of the author—"Tukā says," or "Nāma says," or some similar phrase This has frequently been followed

in the translations, but not always

For purposes of reference the opening words of each abhang are given under the title, the words being transliterated from the Marāṭhī in accordance with the scheme of transliteration shown below. At the same time a reference is given in the case of the abhangs of Nāmdev and of one or two others to Avate's edition of these poets, and in the case of Tukārām to the Indu Prakash edition of his works published in Bombay (referred to as I P)

SYSTEM OF TRANSLITERATION

अ a, आ ā, इ i, ई ī, उ u, ऊ ū, फ ṛ, ए e, ऐ ai, ओ o, औ au, क k, स kh, ग g, घ gh, ड n, च c, छ ch, ज j, झ jh, अ फ , ट ṭ, ठ ṭh, ड ḍ, ट dh, ज n, त t, घ th, द d, घ dh, न n, प p, फ ph, व b, म bh, म m, य y, र r, ङ l, व v, श ś, प ṣ, स s, ह h, ळ l, visorga h, nasalised म as in सयम m.

JÑĀNEŚVAR¹

(13th Century)

I THE GREAT HEARTED (Jñānestrarī IX, 188fi)

Who day and night are from all passion free,—Within their holy hearts I love to be, Dwelling in sanctity.

Hearts of a fervent faith to them belong, Where Dharma² reigns, in them that power is strong That knows or right or wrong

They bathe in Wisdom; then their hunger stay With Perfectness; lo, all in green array, The leaves of Peace are they

Buds of Attainment these; columns they are In Valour's hall. of joy fetched from afar Each a full water-jar.

So dear the path of bhakts, they despise The great Release, c'en in their sport there lies The Wisdom of the wise

With pearls of Peace their limbs they beautify; Within their minds as in a scabbard I, The All-indweller, 1 lie

Therefore their love waxes unceasingly,—
These greatsouled ones, not the least rift can be
Between their hearts and me.

2 For some account of this poet and the poem from which selections I-IV are taken, see pp 13ff

* Dirama, the whole hody of moral and religious law by which the social structure, connoted by the term caste, is maintained in Hinduism

² The Great Release, mukts, or moksa, that is, absorption in the Supreme Spirit, which brings deliverance from rebirth. The saint who follows bhal to prefers to live on earth, in the fellowship of the saints, singing the praises of his God. Cf. Nos. LXXXVII, XCII.

⁴ The All-indueller that is, Krisna, who is the speaker

II THE RAPTURE OF DEVOTION

(Jñāneśvari IX, 197ff)

Dancing they sing my praises, surely not For them rites of atonement,—nay, I wot, Sin's very name's forgot

The mind and heart ask, "What shall we restrain?" The sacred stream cries, "All my cleansing's vain, Since here there is no stain."

Thus by the praises of my name they slay The world's distress, hark, how it echoes gay With happy holiday.

The same to them the monarch or his thrall, The high or low,—themselves alike to all A place of festival

To heaven they seldom go,² but earth they fill Brim full of heaven, chanting my name until The world is cleansed from ill

For not in heaven I dwell, nor in the sky In the sun's orb, than yogi's visions high Far higher still am I

Not in such places, Pānḍay, I abide, But those who sing my praises far and wide, Within their hearts I hide

How glad of heart are they beholding me Forgot are time and place, where'er they be, There sing they joyfully

And they, the while my name they celebrate In endless song, with limpid thought debate Upon the soul's estate

1 My proises Krisna is the speaker

4 Pandav, that is, Arjuna, to whom Krisna is speaking

² To heaven they seldon go Compare Note 3 on p 35 ⁸ Yogi, one who seeks absorption in the Supreme Spirit by mental exercises and concentration

III. AEQUANIMITAS (Jūānešvarī XII, 197ff)

His heart, O Arjuna, no bias knows On all an equal aspect he bestows, Friends let them be or foes

A lamp is he, shining with steadfast light, Not shining to the stranger dark as night, While to the household bright.

As trees whose shadows on their planter fall Or on who hews them down,—so he to all Alike impartial

Sweet to its tender is the cane, nor less To him who crushed it in the cruel press,— Sweet with no bitterness;

So he who deems a friend or foe the same, Alike unmoved though the world should blame, Or though it grant him fame

Lo, as the unperturbed skies enfold The changing seasons, does this one behold Or scorching heat or cold.

Whether a north wind or a south wind blow It matters not to Meru, —even so To him is joy or woe.

Ah, sweetly, sweetly does the moonlight fall Alike upon the monarch and the thrall,—So he the same to all

IV. TRUTH (Jñānestarī XVI, 115ff)

How tender is the bud, yet mark aright How sharp it thrusts; and how the moon is bright Though gently falls its light

² Meru, the central mountain of the universe, round which the planets revolve

Or of what medicine can any tell But bitter is, that makes the sick man well? (Dost mark my parallel?)

Soft as the water 'tis, that gives no pain E'en to the eyeball, but that sweeps amain And rends the earth in twain

To pierce our doubts it's sharper than a spear,— And yet than sweetness self how much more dear To the attentive ear

The ear receives it with a deep delight, And on it travels till by truth's own might It climbs to Brahma's height 1

Ah, who by love of truth was e'er deceived? Or who, when truth he rightly has received, Has e'er by her been grieved?

V "CRY HARI"

(Devāciye dvārī ubhā kşanabharī)

Stand at the door of God
One moment nigh,—
Thou hast the fourfold bliss
Obtained thereby

Cry "Hari," cry aloud,— Let the name ring, So thou shalt merit gain Past reckoning

Dwell in the world, but still
Cry out amain,—
Witness the ancient saints,—
Thou shalt attain

¹ Brahma's height, the final goal of Hinduism is the realisation of identity with Brahma

Hars, one of the names of Visnu or Krisna, popularly interpreted to mean "the remover of sin"

INĀNEŚVAR

Yea (hark to Jūānadev¹)

Vyāsa² has told

How to the Pāndavs' house

God came of old

VI THE NAME

(Santāce saugatī manomārgagatī)

To the dwelling of the saints
Take thy way,
There the Lord himself shall not
Say thee nay.

Cry "Rāmkriṣṇa",—'tis the path To life's goal. Worship Rāma,—he who is

Śwa's soul

Him whose name is unity, Whose find, Fetters of duality Cannot bind.

All the lustre and the glow Yogis^a gain By this name so honey-sweet We attain.

On Pralhāda's childish lips
Dwelt the name,
While to Udday bringing gifts
Krisna came

Easy 'tis to utter it

(Is't not true?)

Yet who use it anywhere

Ah, how few

v, a variant of the author's name, Jian he traditional author of the great epic, t shich is the fortunes of five brothers, the see above, p 36 do and Uddher, famous Vaisnava de

VII "THERE NEEDS NOT AN APPOINTED HOUR'

(Kālavela nāma uccāritā nāhī)

There needs not a propitious hour
This name to cry
Lo, both who speaks it and who hears
Are saved thereby

This holy name bears quite away
All man's offence,—
Hari, the saviour e'en of men
Of little sense

Who speak this name, the soul of all, O happy they! Plain for their fathers' feet they make The heavenward way

VIII THE STOREHOUSE OF BLISS

(Rūpa pāhātā locanī)

When thy visage I descry, O how glad, how glad am I! Vitthal² 'tis, the good the fair,—Mādhav, good beyond compare Many blessings gather here,—How can Vitthal but be dear? Every joy is found in thee, Father, Lord of Rukminī

¹ This is the first abhang sung in every bhajan See p 12
² Vitthal, one of the names of Vithoba, the form of Krisna, wor shipped at Pandharpur Madhav is another name of Krisna, whose wife is Rukmini

MUKTĀBĀĪ

(13th Century)

IX THE LAND OF TOPSY-TURVY'

(Mungi udāli ākāśi)

An ant has leapt up to the sky
And swallowed up the sun on high!
A marvel this that I declare,—
That barren wife a son should bear.
A scorpion plumbs the nether Pit,
And Visnu's snake bows down to it.
A fly an eagle brings to birth
Muktā, beholding, laughs with mirth

X A REMONSTRANCE³ (Majararī dayā karā)

Graciously thy heart incline — Open to me, brother mine!
He's a saint who knoweth how To the world's abuse to bow.
Great of soul indeed is he,—
Wholly purged of vanity
Surely he whose soul is great
Is to all compassionate
Thou pervading Brahman art
How should anger fill thy heart?
Such a poised soul be thine
Open to me, brother mine!

² This Lind of Topsy-turvy is the land of the enlightened soul, where all is One

^{*} This Abhang is said to have been addressed by Muktūbūī to her prother Jūūnicesiar on an occasion when the door of his hut was closed igainst her and she supposed him to be angry

NAMDEV (14th Century)

XI "GONE ARE THE SAINTS"

(Avate, 938 Gele digambara isvaravibhūti)

Gone are the saints, passed to the heavenly sphere, Only their fame tarries behind them here

Our ears have heard of their unworldly ways,— But there are no saints like them nowadays

Men talk of knowledge,—say, "It's this and this," But still Nivritti's way to truth they miss

They'll show us Parabrahm, they say, but, ah, There's no one has the skill of Jñānobā

They talk of bliss of earth and bliss divine, But only Sopandev can say, "'Tis mine"

Ah, God, says Nāmdev, say we what we will, Thy secret, Muktābāi, escapes us still

XII THE HEART'S DESIRE

(Kıtî, devā, tuhma yëu kākulatî)

O God, my cry comes up to thee,—
How sad a cry is it!
What is this tragic destiny
That fate for me has writ?

² On Nivritti, Sopandev and Muktabai, see p 14 ³ Parabrahm, the supreme Brahman

Wherefore, O Hrisikes, dost thou So lightly pass me by? To whom, to whom but to thee now Can I lift up my cry?

As chiming anklets sweetly ring So rings thy name abroad, To human spirits hungering Thou givest peace with God

Thou on thy shoulders carrying
All the world's load of care,—
To thee 'tis such a little thing
My trouble too to bear!

O Mother Pāndurang,² I cry, Drive thou me not away At Han's feet I, Nāma, lie, He will not say me nay

XIII "O HASTE AND COME"
(Āzate, 1482 Kāya mājhā ātā pāhātosi anta)

Dost thou behold me perishing?
O haste and come, my God and king

I die unless thou succour bring, O haste and come, my God and king

To help me is a trifling thing, Yet thou must haste, my God and king

O come (how Nama's clamours ring)
O haste and come, my God and king.

Hrisikes, one of the names of Krisna
Panduranga is one of the most popular names of Vithobi of Pandharpur, and so is equivalent to Krisna or Ham Here, as in many of the poems that follow, the god is addressed as a mother.

XIV A VOW

(Āvaţe, 333 Deha jāvo athavā rāho)

Whether I live or perish, yet
On Pāndurang¹ my faith is set
Thy feet, Lord, I will ne'er forsake,—
To thee this solemn vow I make.
Thy holy name my lips shall tell,
Within my heart thy love shall dwell
This, Kešav,¹ is thy Nāma's vow
O aid me to fulfil it, thou!

XV ONE THING
(Āvate, 501 Hecs devā pas māgata)

One thing I of my Lord entreat, That I may ever serve his feet

That I in Pandhari² abide,
Always his holy saints beside.

Or high or low my birth may be,
Still, Hari, I would worship thee!

Lord of Kamalā,⁸ Nāma prays,
O grant me this through all my days

XVI A BITTER CRY (Āvate, 351 Mājhī kona gatī sāngā)

When will the end of these things be? Ah, tell me, Lord of Pandhari 4 When wilt thou save unhappy me? O tell me, tell me true, for I Cry to thee with a bitter cry.

Lord of Pandhari, Vithoba. See p 11

A Pandurang and Kesav, names of Krisna or Vithoba

² Pandhari, Pandharpūr, see p 11 ³ Lord of Kamalā, Visnu or Krisna, Kamalā being a name of Laksmī, his wife

Why speakest thou not? Ah, Vitthal, why Thus silent? Whither shall I fly?

Who else will bear my sore distress? Smite me not in my helplessness

As to the child is wholly sweet His mother,—so to me thy feet.

Thou gracious Lord of Rakhumāi.1 Friend of the poor, hear Nama's crv.

XVII SEEKING

(Arate, 391 Tatva pusārayā gelo vedajūāsi)

From Vedic students first the truth I sought. And found them full of "Thou shalt," "Thou shalt not." Never shall they possess tranquillity, For mighty in them is the power of "me"

From Scripture scholars sought I once again The form divine, but found them rent in twain Not one agrees with what the others say, But pride and error lead them all astray

Next in Purans8 I sought that form so fair, But still, alas, no place of rest was there The preachers preach of Brahm but set their mind On lust, and so true peace they never find.

Ask of the Haridas' the way devout. You'll find in him no faith at all but doubt. He tells in words the Name's high excellence. While all the time engrossed with things of sense.

1 Rakhumāi, Rukmini, the wife of Krisna

-expounded in the temples by Puraniks or preachers

Heridas, a devotee of Krisna. Praise of the Name of Krisna is one of the ways of devotion, See Nov II and V above.

The power of "me," of egoism, which holds one in bondage by preventing identification with the Supreme Spirit How far here and elsewhere the idea has an ethical implication and approximates to *selfishness' it is not easy to judge Cf. pp 47, 78, 80, etc Purors, collections of legendary stories of the gods, which are

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* Haridas, a devotee of Krisna Praise of the Name of Krisna is one of the ways of devotion See Nos. II and V above.

Wealth to his eyes is only dust Jewels as stones he sees, Gone from his heart is rage and lust, Pardon dwells there, and peace

He will not for an instant rest (Hear what I, Nāma, say), But Govind's' name—of all the best— He utters night and day

XXII ILLUMINATION

(Avate, 586 Nidristace seje sarpa)

One fast asleep can never know
That to his chamber crawling in
There comes the snake,—and heedless so
Am I to lure of sense or sin,
Since inward vision to bestow,
My Kesav has so gracious been
Alike are gold and dross to me,

Now ne'er my soul can harmed be,
Walk I in heaven or in the flame.

Since one with final bliss are we,
Then what is either praise or blame?

¹ Govind, Krisna

JANABA1¹ (14th Century)

XXIII PUNDLIK

(Acate, 172 Bhaktā mājī agraganī)

To holy Pundlik² give
The highest place.
Sages and saints he saved,—
Saved by his grace.

Thou, standing on the brick,³
That grace give me,
Who, Pundlik, clasp thy feet,
So lowlily.

XXIV GRINDING

(Avate, 188 Vairagya abhimane)

Dispassion's mill, with earnest mind, Lo, here grind I,— While for a handle faith I find To turn it by.

A handful of past deeds I deem Grist for the mill, And grind in the one Soul supreme My good or ill

² On Janabai, see p. 16f

* Pundlik is a saint who is specially associated with the origin of

the worship of Vithoba at Pandharpur

³ He who stands on the brick is Vithoba, who, according to the legend, stood patiently waiting while Pundlik attended to his parents needs

PSALMS OF MARATHA SAINTS

Wealth to his eyes is only dust
Jewels as stones he sees,
Gone from his heart is rage and lust,
Pardon dwells there, and peace

He will not for an instant rest
(Hear what I, Nama, say),
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That to his chamber crawling in
There comes the snake,—and heedless so
Am I to lure of sense or sin,
Since inward vision to bestow,
My Kesav has so gracious been

Alike are gold and dross to me,
Jewel and common stone, the same
Now ne'er my soul can harmed be,
Walk I in heaven or in the flame.
Since one with final bliss are we,
Then what is either praise or blame?

1 Govind, Krisna

Now Bhakti's ninefold path behold, By which nine saints attained of old Say I,—to render up the soul, Yea that is bhabti's highest goal

XXVIII THE SCORNER

(Bharartha Ramayara, Chap I)

Who praises and who scorns me too, Both are my mother. Ay, I view My scorners as my mother true

For such are kind to me They say Hard words that wash my soil away, As does a mother's bathing They

Are friends indeed and strength supply To me Were I to blame them, why, The guilty one would then be I.

O sweet is scorning, setting free From bondage of duality. A gracious benefactor he

Before the scorner bow we low. Blest be his mother, for I know Who suffer scorn to Freedom go.

- The nine ways of blakts, enumerated (with one omission) above, are as follows
 - (1) Sravana, or hearing, illustrated by Bhupati
 - (2) The Kirton, or singing of sacred songs, illustrated by Sri Suka
 - (3) Nama Smarana, repention of the divine name, illustrated by Pralhad
 - (4) Padoserara, worshipping the feet, illustrated by Rama.
 - (5) Arcara, worship of an image, is omitted from Ekanath's enumeration
 - (6) I'endara, reverential adoration, illustrated by Akrura (7) Dassa, the service of a slave, illustrated by Maruti.
 - (8) Sakhya, friendship, illustrated by Arjuna
 - (9) Atmanicedana, self surrender, illustrated by Bali
 - * This is from another work of Ekanath, his Bhavartha Ramasara

XXVII THE NINEFOLD PATH OF BHAKTI

(Navavidhā bliakti nava ācaratī)

Now hearken while we sing their praise Who follow bhakti's ninefold ways But name them with the rising sun,—Thy sins are burned up everyone

The hearing ear saved Bhūpati,
In seven days was he set free
The mighty Bhāgavat to hear
He made himself one listening ear
Srī Suka tried the hirtery mass

Śrī Śuka tried the kīrtan,—so He, too, was saved, as all men know

The name was chanted by Pralhad Till truth shone forth and made him glad Hari himself came down to men And slew the demon, Daitya, then

Ramā was dear unto the Lord, For she the feet divine adored Her soft hands tend with ceaseless care Those lotus feet, so fine, so fair

When he the Cowherd's footprints sees Akrūra falls upon his knees, And prostrate thus he sings his praise, Lost in a rapture of amaze

Sitā exalted Mārutī, Serving his master lowlily The humble service of a slave To Sitā's lord he gladly gave

Next Arjun, of the Lord's own kin, Whom to his heart he gathered in And taught the Gītā's way of peace, To find from birth and death release

Krisna,—himself when Bali gave,— Before his door served as a slave, Three paces all the land he sought, Contented with a beggar's lot. If but before thy door

A guest appear,
Thou'lt speak to him some fitting word,
Some word of cheer

Such courtesy, O Lord,
Becometh thee,
And we,—ah, we're not lost to sense
So utterly.

XXXV A BEGGAR FOR LOVE

(I P 1502 Thākalose dvārī)

A beggar at thy door,
Pleading I stand,
Give me an alms, O God,
Love from thy loving hand

Spare me the barren task,

To come, and come for nought.
A gift poor Tukā craves,
Unmerited, unbought

XXXVI "GOD WHO IS OUR HOME" (I P 1820 Māterina bālā)

To the child how dull the Fair If his mother be not there!

So my heart apart from thee, O thou Lord of Pandhari 11

Chātak² turns from stream and lake, Only rain his thirst can slake

How the lotus all the night Dreameth, dreameth of the light 1

Lord of Pandi ari, that 14, Vithoba whose central shrine 14 a

^{*} Chatch, a species of cuckoo, often called the brain fever bird. It is popularly believed to be able to drink only rain water, and hence its agonised cry for rain.

TUKĀRĀM¹

(1608-49)

XXXIII THE MOTHER'S HOUSE

(IP 266 Kanyā sāsuryāsı jaye)

As the bride looks back to her mother's house, And goes, but with dragging feet, So my soul looks up unto thee and longs, That thou and I may meet.

As a child cries out and is sore distressed,
When its mother it cannot see,
As a fish that is taken from out the wave,
So 'tis, says Tukā, with me

XXXIV THE SUPPLIANT (IP 530 Ucsta te kāya)

How can I know the right,—
So helpless I—
Since thou thy face hast hid from me,
O thou most high!

I call and call again
At thy high gate
None hears me, empty is the house
And desolate

3 For some account of Tukaram see pp 18ff

Another and perhaps better authenticated interpretation would be

How can I know the right,—
I, helpless one!
Of pride of knowledge, lo, O God,
I now have none!

² Here Tukārām compares himself in this sathisāra, this condition of "wandering" and exile, which is life in its repeated forms, to the child-bride going to live with her husband and looking back with longing to her mother's house. The mother's house, mōherghar, round which in India so many happy associations cluster, is for the soul the breast of God. The exiled spirit looks back "to God, who is his home"

If but before thy door

A guest appear,

Thou'lt speak to him some fitting word,

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Such courtesy, O Lord,

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XXXV. A BEGGAR FOR LOVE (I.P 1502. Trakelose desri)

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Spare me the barren task.

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XXXVI "GOD WHO IS OUR HOME" (I.P. 1820. Material 85%)

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O thou Lord of Pandhari!

Chātak² turns from stream and lake,

Only rain his thirst can slake.

How the lotus all the night

Dreameth, dreameth of the light!

Lord of Romanori wat 's Vithabl, more central sonine is a

² Orland, a species of cuckon of an extent the brain fever find. It is popularly believed to be able to drink only rain mater, and hence he approved try for rain

As the stream to fishes thou, As is to the calf the cow To a faithful wife how dear Tidings of her Lord to hear! How a miser's heart is set On the wealth he hopes to get! Such, says Tukā, such am I! But for thee I'd surely die

XXXVII THE STRIFE OF SENSE (IP 827 Azaghā veficalo)

Wearied by strife of sense, By call and counter-call, To thee I hie me thence, And tell thee all

Yea, Lord, thou knowest this,
I've brought my life to thee
Cast down my burden is
And I am free!

Now all my being yearns,
Yearns with a strong desire,
My love within me burns,
A wasting fire

If thou canst help indeed—
(Hear what I, Tukā, say)—
Nārāyan, help with speed,
Make no delay!

XXXVIII WAITING (I.P 469 Vāta pāhe bāhe)

With head on hand before my door, I sit and wait in vain Along the road to Pandhari My heart and eyes I strain.

Narayan, that 13, Visnu The name probably retains a general stion as describing the Supreme Being, though it was approd by the Vaisnavas as a name of Visnu

When shall I look upon my Lord?
When shall I see him come?
Of all the passing days and hours
I count the heavy sum

With watching long my eyelids throb, My limbs with sore distress, But my impatient heart forgets My body's weariness

Sleep is no longer sweet to me,
I care not for my bed,
Forgotten are my house and home,
All thirst and hunger fled

Says Tukā, Blest shall be the day,—
Ah, soon may it betide!—
When one shall come from Pandharī¹
To summon back the bride.

XXXIX DESOLATION

(I P 1836 Dolsyā pāzhar kantha māzhā date)

Sobs choke my throat; my eyes
Are wet with tears,—
Still waiting for my Pandurang,
Till he appears.

So long cast off by thee,
My heart despairs
Ah, whither hast thou gone, absorbed
In other cares?

So many tasks and cares
Are thine, while I—
I am forgotten thus, alas,
And left to die

² Tul tram lived in the village of Dehu, while Vithoba, whom he worshipped, had his temple at Pandharpur. In this abharg, as in No NAMII, he is the child-bride, longing to return to his mother's house.

Pilgrims and saints go past
To Pandhari,
And many messages they bear
From me to thee.

Who else but thee would run
To help my need?
O come to me, my Pāndurang,
O come with speed

How long still must I wait,
To see thy face?
Thou hast forgot thy trembling child,
Thou full of grace

Once more remember me,
I, Tukā, pray
O come to fetch thy darling home,
Make no delay

XL "THEE, LORD OF PITY, I BESEECH"

(I P 2824 Agā karunākarā)

Thee, Lord of Pity, I beseech,
Come speedily and set me free
Yea, when he hears my piteous speech,
All eager should Nārāyan¹ be

Lo, in the empty world apart
I hearken, waiting thy footfall
Vitthal,² thou father, mother art,
Thou must not loiter at my call

Thou, thou alone art left to me All else when weighed is vanity Now, Tukā pleads, thy gift of grace complete, Now let mine eyes behold thy equal feet

Nārāyan, see Note on p 58 above
Vithhal, one of the names of Vithobā or Pandurang or Krişna

XLI FROM THE DEPTHS
(IP 3653 Aike Pāndurangā vacana)

O Pandurang, this once Hark to my cry, For I thy servant am, Thine only I

Save me by whatso means
Thou best may'st deem,
No longer now I make
Or plan or scheme

How carefully my plans
And schemes I wrought!
My falsehood and my pride
Bring all to nought

One dull of wit am I,
Of low degree,
By selfishness possessed
And vanity.

An instant and on me Ruin may fall Come to my help, O God, Come to my call

VLII FORSAKE ME NOT!
(I P 4381. Kurangî püdasa cukalese)

If far from home the poor faun roam,
With grief its heart will break
Thus lonely I with thee not nigh
O do not me forsake!

Thy heart within, all, all my sin Ah, hide; make no delay Eternal thou — look on me now In love, I, Tukā, pray

XLIII MOTHER VITHOBĀ (I P 1540 Tuja mhanatīla kripecā sāgara)

Ah, Pandurang, if, as men say,
A sea of love thou art,
Then wherefore dost thou so delay?
O take me to thy heart!

I cry for thee as for the hind The faun makes sore lament Nowhere its mother it can find, With thirst and hunger spent

With milk of love, ah, suckle me
At thy abounding breast,
O Mother, haste—In thee, in thee
My sad heart findeth rest

XLIV ME MISERABLE (I P 806 Alpa mājhī matī)

Since little wit have I,
O hear my mournful cry
Grant now, O grant to me
That I thy feet may see
I have no steadfastness,
Nārāyan,² I confess
Have mercy, Tukā prays,
On my unhappy case

XLV WITHIN MY HEART
(I P 868 Na kalatā kāya)

I know no way by which My faith thy feet can reach Nor e'er depart

2 Nārājan, see Note on p 58 above

³ In this abhang the conception of Vithoba or Pandurang as a mother, which we have already met with (see Note on p 43 above), is elaborated

How, how can I attain
That thou, O Lord, shalt reign
Within my heart?

Lord, I beseach thee, bear And grant to faith sincere, My heart within, Thy gracious face to see, Driving afar from me Deceit and sin.

O come, I, Tukā, pray,
And ever with me stay,
Mine, mine to be.
Thy mighty hand outstretch
And save a fallen wretch,
Yea, even me.

XLVI THE RESTLESS HEART (I.P. 1031. Jivarēvacāri telemaj mērē

As on the bank the poor fish lies.
And gasps and writhes in pzin,
Or as a man with anxions eyes
Seeks hidden gold in vain,—
So is my heart distressed and cries
To come to thee again

Thou knowest, Lord, the agony
Of the lost infant's wail,
Yearning his mother's face to see
(How oft I tell this tale!)
O at thy feet the mystery
Of the dark world unveil!

The fire of this harassing thought
Upon my bosom preys.
Why is it I am thus forgot?
(O, who can know thy ways?)
Nay, Lord, thou sees my hapless for;
Hare meney, Tuke save.

XLVII "I LONG TO SEE THY FACE"
(IP 2672 Tuja pähäve he dharito väsanä)

I long to see thy face,
But ah, in me hath holiness no place
By thy strength succour me,
So only, only I thy feet may see l
Though Sādhu's' robes I've worn,
Within I'm all unshaven and unshorn
Lost, lost, O God, am I,
Unless thou help me, Tukā,—me who cry!

XLVIII "KEEP ME FROM VANITY"
(I P 3443 Nako maja täthä, nako abhimāna)

Keep me from vanity
Keep me from pride,
For sure I perish if
I quit thy side
From this deceiving world
How hard to flee!
Ah, thou, Vaikuntha's² Lord,
Deliver me!
If once thy gracious face
I look upon,
The world's enticement then
Is past and gone

XLIX ASPIRATION (I P 1996 Devê êtê aisê karî upakêra)

One favour grant, O God,—that now by me My flesh may be forgot, So shall I have (for I at last have learned) Bliss for my lot

¹ Sādhu, an ascetic who, as such, wears a yellow robe and shaves his head

^{*} Vaikuntha, the heaven of Visnu, or Krisna or Vithoba

Give to my heart and all its moods a place
Close by thy side,
Break, break the bond that binds me to desire,
To passion, shame and pride

Thy name to utter and the saints to know,—
I beg but this of thee
Here is no feigning, Lord, my service take
Of faith and purity!

L THE ONLY REFUGE
(IP 4004 Azaghyā pātakāncī mi eka rāsī)

I am a mass of sin,
Thou art all purity,
Yet thou must take me as I am
And bear my load for me
Me Death has all consumed,
In thee all power abides
All else forsaking, at thy feet
Thy servant Tukā hides

LI DESOLATE

(IP 3695 Konācecintana karā aisā kāle)

When thought of all but thee
Has from me gone,
Still by thy strength upheld
I struggle on

Come to me, Vitthal, come!

For thee I wait

O, wherefore hast thou me

Left desolate.

Many oppress me sore
With cruel might;
My very enemies
Are day and night.

¹ I sthal, see Note on p. 40 above

Ah come and take thy place
At my heart's core,
Then shall the net of ill
Snare me no more

LII "O SAVE ME, SAVE ME!"
(I P 3837 Trāhe, trāhe, trāhe, sodavī anantā)

O save me, save me, Mightiest, Save me and set me free O let the love that fills my breast Cling to thee lovingly

Grant me to taste how sweet thou art, Grant me but this, I pray, And never shall my love depart Or turn from thee away

Then I thy name shall magnify And tell thy praise abroad, For very love and gladness I Shall dance before my God

Grant to me, Vitthal, that I rest Thy blessed feet beside, Ah, give me this, the dearest, best, And I am satisfied

LIII NEAR YET FAR (I P 4419 Tujavīna tīlabharī)

There is no place, small as a sesamum,
But thou, they say, art there
That deep in all this universe thou dwell'st
Sages and saints declare

So, I, of old thy child, in faith of this
Come seeking help from thee
Thou overflow'st the world, and yet, and yet,
Thy face I cannot see

¹ Vitfhal, see Note on p 40 above

"Why should I meet this abject—I to whom There is nor bound nor end?"
Is it with such a thought thou comest not, My father and my friend?
Ah, what shall Tuka do that he thy feet May touch and tend?

LIV. BEYOND THE MOUNTAINS, GOD
(1 P 4420 Kāma krodha āda)

Here tower the hills of passion and of lust,—
Far off the Infinite!
No path I find and all impassable
Fronts me the hostile height

Ah, God is lost, my friend Nārāyan¹ now How can I e'er attain?

Thus it appears that all my life, so dear,
I've spent, alas, in vain

LV "I CANNOT UNDERSTAND I LOVE" (I P 4361 Na kale mahimā)

Thy greatness none can comprehend.
All dumb the Vedas are.
Forspent the powers of mortal mind,
They cannot climb so far.
How can I compass him whose light
Illumes both sun and star?

The serpent of a thousand tongues²
Cannot tell all thy praise,
Then how, poor I? Thy children we,
Mother of loving ways !
Within the shadov of thy grace,
Ah, hide me, Tukā says

1 Nara, an, see Note on p. 58 above. The name appears to be used here to suggest the Supreme Being, above man's reach

The script to fe thousand tongues, Sega, the thousand-headed snake which is at once the couch and canopy of Visnu and which upholds the world

LVI NOT ONE BUT TWO

(IP 3753 Advaiti to majke nāhi samādhāna)

Advast¹ contents me not, but dear to me
The service of thy feet
O grant me this reward! To sing of thee
To me how sweet!

Setting us twain, lover and Lord, apart,
This joy to me display
Grant it to Tukā—Lord of all thou art—
Some day, some day

LVII MAN'S EXTREMITY

(IP 648 Mājhā tava khunţalā upāva)

Ah, then, O God, the efforts all are vain
By which I've sought thy blessed feet to gain
First there was loving faith, but faith I've none,
Nowise my restless soul can I restrain

Then pious deeds, but no good will have I
For these, nor wealth to help the poor thereby,
I know not how to honour Brahman guests,
Alas! the springs of love in me are dry

I cannot serve the guru or the saint,
Not mine to chant the name, with toil to faint,
Perform the sacred rites, renounce the world
I cannot hold my senses in restraint

¹ Advait, the philosophical doctrine of non-duality, that is, of the ultimate identity of the individual soul and the Supreme Soul Tukaram prefers "the bliss of duality"

The poet here enumerates various means by which the divine favour is sought or by which men endeavour to obtain Release These vary from the feeding of Brahmans to attainment of a condition of unity with Brahman beyond all distinctions He finds himself unequal to any of them and finally casts himself upon God's mercy for a similar testimony on the part of Namdev see No XVII above

My heart has never trod the pilgrim's way, The vows I make I know not how to pay.

"Ah, God is here," I cry Not so, not so 1 For me distinctions have not passed away.

Therefore, I come, O God, to plead for grace. I, worthy only of a servant's place

No store of ment such an one requires My firm resolve is taken, Tukā says

LVIII THOUGH HE SLAY ME (I P 626 Ata tuja halela te kari)

Now I submit me to thy will, Whether thou save or whether kill: Keep thou me near or send me hence, Or plunge me in the war of sense.2

Thee in my ignorance I sought, Of true devotion knowing nought, Little could I, a dullard, know. Myself the lowest of the low

My mind I cannot steadfast hold. My senses wander uncontrolled. Ah, I have sought and sought for peace In vain: for me there's no release.

Now bring I thee a faith complete And lay my life before thy feet. Do thou, O God, what seemeth best; In thee, in thee alone is rest.

In thee I trust, and, hapless wight, Cling to thy skirts with all my might My strength is spent, I, Tuka say, Now upon thee this task I lay.

Bur of serse, saihsara, "wandering," rebirth again and again in the bods

^{1 &}quot; Il God as lete " He has not attained to a realisation of his identity with the Supreme Spirit, or, perhaps, be has not realized God's

LIX PĀNDURANG

(IP 1033 Kona ähmä puse)

Who asks if spent and weary we? Who else, O Pāndurang, but thee? Whom shall we tell our joy or grief? Who to our thirst will bring relief? Who else this fever will assuage? Who bear us o'er the ocean's rage? Who will our heart's desire impart And clasp us to his loving heart? What other master shall we own? What helper else but thee alone?

Ah, Tukā says, thou knowest all, Prostrate before thy feet I fall

LX COMPLETE SURRENDER (I P 702 Ānīka dusare maja nākī)

Now Pandurang I've chosen for my part, None, none but his to be In all my thoughts he dwells, dwells in my heart, Sleeping and waking he

Yea, all my being's powers before him bow, None other faith is aught See, Tukā says, mine eyes behold him now, Standing all wrapt in thought 1

LXI TO THY DEAR FEET! (IP 4161 Prema jadale)

To thy dear feet my love I bind No other longing stirs my mind

s Standing all wrapt in thought Compare the description on p 49 above, of this god as "standing on the brick"

I think of thee through days and nights, And so discharge my holy rites

Nought know I but thy name alone.— Thus to myself myself am known

When comes at last the hour of death O save me, save me, Tukā saith

LXII HE LEADETH ME (I P 2000 Jethe jāto tethe tū)

Holding my hand thou leadest me, My comrade everywhere. As I go on and lean on thee, My burden thou dost bear

If, as I go, in my distress
I frantic words should say,
Thou settest right my foolishness
And tak'st my shame away

Thus thou to me new hope dost send,
A new world bringest in,
Now know I every man a friend
And all I meet my kin.

So like a happy child I play
In thy dear world, O God,
And everywhere—I, Tukā, say—
Thy bliss is spread abroad.

LXIII THE JOY OF THE NAME (I P 818 Nama athavita)

Lord, let it be that when thy name
Into my thoughts shall come,
My love to thee shall mount like flame,
My lips with joy be dumb

Filled are my eyes with happy tears,
With rapture every limb,
Yea, with thy love my frame appears
Filled to the very brim

Thus all my body's strength I'll spend
In hymns of joyful praise,
Thy name I'll sing nor ever end
Through all the nights and days

Yea, Tukā says, for ever so
I'll do, for this is best,
Since at the feet of saints, I know,
Is found eternal rest

LXIV LOVE'S CAPTIVE (IP 783 Premasūtra dori)

Bound with cords of love I go, By Hari¹ captive led, Mind and speech and body, lo, To him surrenderèd

He shall rule my life for he
Is all compassionate
His is sole authority,
And we his will await

LXV THE BHAKTA'S DUTY (IP 1437 Nisthävantā bhāva)

The duty of the man of faith
Is trust and loyalty,
A purpose hid within his heart
That cannot moved be

A steadfast faith and passionless
In Vitthal that abides,
A faith that not an instant strays
To any god besides

Who that is such a one as that Was ever cast away? Never has such a tale been told, Never, I, Tukā, say

¹ Hari, that is, Krisna

LAVI. LOVE FINDS OUT GOD
(IP 810 Manatācātīta tujhe he svarūpa)

Thy nature is beyond the grasp
Of human speech or thought.
So love I've made the measure-rod,
By which I can be taught

Thus with the measure-rod of love I mete the Infinite.
In sooth, to measure him there is None other means so fit.

Not Yoga's power, nor sacrifice,
Nor fierce austerity,
Nor yet the strength of thought profound
Hath ever found out thee

And so, says Tukā, graciously,
Oh Kesav, take, we pray
Love's service that with simple hearts
Before thy feet we lay

LXVII "GOD IS OURS"
(I P 1870 Deva āmacā āmacā)

God is ours, yea, ours is he, Soul of all the souls that be

God is nigh without a doubt, Nigh to all, within, without.

God is gracious, gracious still, Every longing he'll fulfil.

God protects, protects his own. Strife and death he casteth down.

Kind is God, ah, kind indeed, Tukā he will guard and lead.

Love, blakts or loving devotion See Introduction, p. 11.
* Loge, see note on p. 36 above * Ketar, Krisna.

LXVIII "ONE THING I DO"
(I P 2638 Laukikā puratī nahve mājhī sevā)

I serve thee, not because Honour I crave, Nay, Kesay, for I am Thy slave

Therefore to serve thy feet,—
For this I cry,
For naught, for naught but this
Crave I

To my Lord's service, see, One heart I've brought, Ever,—without, within,— One thought

Thus mine appointed task
Do I somehow,
Whether 'tis wrong or right
Judge thou

LXIX HE KNOWS OUR NEEDS (I P 602 Trailokya pālitā)

Unwearied he bears up the universe,
How light a burden I!
Does not his care the frog within the stone
With food supply?

The bird, the creeping thing, lays up no store,
This great One knows their need
And if I, Tuka, cast on him my load,
Will not his mercy heed?

¹ Kesav, one of the names of Krisna

LXX "IN HIM ABIDE"

(1 P 819 Janani he jane balakāce varma)

The mother knows her child,—his secret heart,
His joy or woe

Who holds the blind man's hand alone can tell Where he desires to go

The timid suppliant at his champion's back Can safely hide

Who only clings, see, the strong swimmer bears
To the stream's further side
Vitthal, says Tuka, knows our every need,
Only in him abide.

LYXI THE BOLDNESS OF FAITH

(I P 716 Bhavasındhüce kaya kode)

Launch upon the sea of life,
Fear not aught that thou mayst meet
Stout the ship of Pandurang,
Not a wave shall wet thy feet
Many saints await thee there,
Standing on the further shore
Haste, says Tuka, haste away,
Follow those who've gone before

LYXII. BEATA CULPA

(I P 758 Jari mi nahvto patita)

How couldst thou e'er have cleansed me, But for my sinful plight? So first come I, and then thy grace, O mercy infinite.

The magic stone was nothing worth,
Till iron brought it fame.
Did no one by the Wish Tree wish,
Whence would it get its name?

The nagic stone, parisa, which turns from into gold Tie Wist Tree, lalpatar i, a tree in Indra's heaven, supposed to grant every desire Compare the kanadheru, the cow of plenty, which has a similar property

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This great One knows their need
And if I, Tukā, cast on him my load,
Will not his mercy heed?

¹ Kesav, one of the names of Krisna

The world's possessed by sin And envy reigns within The human breast; And I shall teach mankind, Though I'm myself as blind As all the rest.

LXXVI THE PRIDE OF KNOWLEDGE (I P 2849 Hina mājhi yāti)

Though I'm a man of lowly birth
The saints have magnified my worth
And so within my heart to hide
Has come the great destroyer, pride
In my fond heart the fancy dwells
That I am wise and no one else
O, save me, save me, Tukā prays,
Spent like the wind are all my days

LAXVII THE UNVEILING OF LOVE (IP 2966 Jänoni nenate karī mājhe mana)

Enlighten thou mine eyes Making me lowly wise,

Thy love to me unveil Then in the world I'll be As, from all soilure free, The lotus pure and pale.

Whether men praise or jeer.

Hearing I shall not hear;

Like the rapt yog? I.

To me the world shall seem

Like visions of a dream That, with our waking, fly.

Till we that state attain All, all our toil is vain, I, Tukā, testify.

¹ Yogi, see Note on p. 36 above.

INMI THE SNAPE OF PRIDE

(I P 1779 Lucieyà căplije)

Note the state as I in early of subtle speech, But al, the root of things I cannot reach

Iterclore, () Lord of Pandhari, my heart
It a contressed. Who knows my inward part?

I p and became from honour that men paid I o me, mand thus my upward growth was stayed

Alzel The way of truth I cannot see, Hel! fast by Sell in dark captivity

LIMIS I AM POOR AND NEEDY

No del D
Save as tivhet de l'e donc nor thoughts l've thought,
Guard me, O'ge he serant, I am nought
The tumult of m. God, and O, control
Ah, do not, do nob restless soul
The guilt of mine in Kh cast on me
My countless sins, I, Thraquity
Upon thy loving heart I line ikā, say,

LXXV A BLIND LEADER OF THE BLIND

I have grown very wise
In mine own foolish eyes,
But faith has fled
My life is vain indeed,
But worse that rage and greed
Dwell in faith's stead

The world's possessed by sin
And envy reigns within
The human breast,
And I shall teach mankind,
Though I'm myself as blind
As all the rest

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The lotus pure and pale.

Whether men praise or jeer, Hearing I shall not hear,

Like the rapt $\log i^2$ I

To me the world shall seem
Like visions of a dream

That, with our waking, fly

Till we that state attain All, all our toil is vain, I, Tuka, testify.

² Yori, see Note on p. 36 above

LXXVIII THE HAVEN

(IP 3696 Kājī tuhmī aise nahva kripāvanta)

Ah, wherefore so unkind?

Let my sad breast

At the hid centre find

It's place of rest

No wind of good or ill Shall enter there, But peace, supremely still, Supremely fair

To me the flux of things
Brings sore distress,
The world's mutation brings
But heaviness

Therefore I, Tukā, cry,
Clinging thy feet,
"Break, break my 'me' and 'my,"
My vain conceit"

LXXIX WEARINESS

(IP 977 Kāja ātā āhmī pota ci bharāve)

Shall we, sham saints, the world beguile Glutting our belly's greed the while?

O tell thy thought, if this it be, For I am weary utterly

Shall we the poet's mood rehearse And string together endless verse?

Shall Tukā ope his shop² again And, O Nārāyan, ruin men?

¹ My "me" and "mj," see Note on p 45 above ² His shop Tukārām was a seller of grain

LXXX. GOD'S COUNTERFEIT (I P 347 Jc kā rañjale gāñjale)

Is there a man who says of all,
Whether upon them sorrow fall,
Or whether 10y—"These, these are mine"?
That is the saint. mark well the sign
God dwells in him The good man's breast
Is of all men's the tenderest.
Is any helpless or undone?
Be he a slave, be he a son—
On all alike he mercy shows,
On all an equal love bestows

How oft must I this tale repeat! That man is God's own counterfeit.

LAAXI SELF-SURRENDER (IP 3474 Dilā fivabhāva)

My self I've rendered up to thee; I've cast it from me utterly.

Now here before thee, Lord, I stand, Attentive to thy least command.

The self within me now is dead, And thou enthroned in its stead.

Yea, this I, Tukā, testify, No longer now is "me" or "my."

LXXXII DYING TO LIVE

(I P. 2648 Apule marans pal ile mya dola)

Before my eyes my dead self lies;
O, bliss beyond compare!
Jos fills the worlds, and I rejoice,
The soul of all things there

¹ This is one of Tukuram's abl ongs which is interpreted differenties those who claim him as a their and those who claim him as a

My selfish bonds are loosed, and now I reach forth far and free Gone is the soil of birth and death, The petty sense of "me"

Nārāyan's grace gave me this place, Where I in faith abide Now, Tukā says, my task I've done And spread the message wide

LXXXIII THE ROOT OF LONGING (IP 1436 Asā he samūla khanon: kādhāvī)

Who is he would act the true gosavi's¹ part? Let him dig the root of longing from his heart If he dare not, in his pleasures let him stay—Folly were it should he choose another way For when longing he hath slain victoriously, Only then shall he from all come forth set free Yea, says Tukā, does thy heart for union thirst? Crush—be sure!—the seed of longing in thee first

LXXXIV THE SECRET OF PEACE (IP 580 Santiparate nahi sukha)

Calm² is life's crown, all other joy beside
Is only pain
Hold thou it fast, thou shalt, whate'er betide,
The further shore attain

When passions rage and we are wrung with woe And sore distress,

Comes calm, and then—yea, Tukā knows it—lo!
The fever vanishes

follower of advarta pantheism To the former it seems that the bliss he describes is that which comes from the death of the lower self and the presence of God in his heart. To the latter the bliss is that which is produced by the realisation of his identity with the Supreme Spirit, and the "self-naughting" is the disappearance of personality itself.

Gosavi, a holy man, usually of the Sudra class, who has

renounced the world Calm, Santi

LXXXV. THE FELLOWSHIP OF SAINTS (I.P. 2051. Agnimān gelc)

What enters fire, its former nature lost,
Fire to itself transforms.
Touched by the magic stone, lo, iron now
Gold that the world adorns.
Into the Gangā¹ flow the little streams,
With the great Gangā blent.
Nay, e'en its neighbour trees the sandal tree
Infects with its sweet scent.
So to the feet of saints is Tukā bound,
Linked in a blest content

LYXXVI. THE SIMPLE PATH

(I P. 2341. Bahutā chandāce bahu vase jana)

Diverse men's thoughts as are their vanities,
Distract not thou thy mind to follow these.
Cling to the faith that thou hast learned, the love
That, coming, filled thee with its fragrances
For Hari's worship is a mother,—rest
It is and peace, shade for the weariest.
Why, then, who ties a stone about his neck
And drowns himself, is but a fool confessed.

LXXXVII. THE WAY OF LOVE (1.P 1589. Ghotavina lala)

The learned in Brahma I shall make to long With new desire; those once so safe and strong, Set free, I bring back glad to bondage So, They are made one with Brahma by a song.

Gengo, the river Ganges

By a song, that is, by the kirtan, the method of celebrating the praise of the god by music and singing. This is one of the chief methods of bhakti, as followed by Tuklitam, and he praises it as more elicetive than the way of knowledge followed by the philosopher or than any other way. See Introduction, p. 24.

God is their debtor¹ now, O glad release I'll bid the weary pilgrim take his ease The proud ascetic may forsake his pride Away with offerings and charities!

By love and true devotion life's high goal I'll help men to attain—yea, Brahma's soul ²
"O, happy we, who Tuka's face have seen "—So men will say and Tuka they'll extol

LXXXVIII THE? THIEF

(I P 4265 Jālo balīvanta höūniyā Śaranāgata)

I came to him in woful plight,
He, gracious, girded me with might
His house I entered unaware
And stole the treasure hidden there
So I have wrought a deep design
That all his riches shall be mine
I kissed his feet and then by stealth
I, Tukā, robbed him of his wealth

LXXXIX THE TRAVELLER

(I P 3189 Ksanakşanā hācī karāvā vicāra)

Let thy thought at all times be,—
Over life's tempestuous sea
We must fare
Soon the body perisheth,
Life is swallowed up of Death
O beware!

Seek the fellowship of saints,
Seek, until thy spirit faints,
Heaven's ways!
Let not dust make blind thine eyes,
Dust of worldly enterprise,
Tukā says

¹ God is their debtor, because he desires, and gets from them, love ² Brah ma's soul, the real essence of Brahma, which is the goal of all Hindu religious effort

XC BY FAITH ALONE

(IP 949 Athave deta)

In God, in God—forget him not!—
Do thou thy refuge find
Let every other plan or plot
Go with the wind!

Why toil for nought? Wake, wake from sleep!
By learning's load weighed down,
Thou in the world's abysses deep
Art like to drown

O, flee from thence. Only by faith Canst thou to God attain And all thy knowledge, Tukā saith, Will prove in vain

XCI A STEADFAST MIND (IP 109 Mana apamana gore)

Honour, dishonour that men may pay, Bundle them up and throw them away Where there is ever a steadfast mind, There thou the vision of God shalt find Whereso the fountains of peace abide, Stayed is the passage of time and tide Calm thou the impulse that stirs thy breast, Surely, says Tukā, a small request.

ACII THE NAME OF THE LIVING ONE (IP 1462 Decidable he wiresti)

Hear, O God, my supplication,—
Do not grant me Liberation 1

Liberation, mel sa, ruil is, absorption in the Supreme Spirit with its consequence that he will not be reborn. He does not wish this gift, but desires to live in the world, experiencing the love of devotion as a Vaisnavite, a follower of brakes. Cf. Note on p. 35 above.

'Tis what men so much desire, Yet how much this joy is higher!

Home of every Vaisnavite, See, with glow of love alight!

By their door with folded hands Full Attainment waiting stands

Heavenly joy is not for me, For it passeth speedily,

But that name how strangely dear That in songs of praise we hear!

Yea, thou, dark as clouds that lower, Knowest not thine own name's power

Ah, says Tukā, it is this Makes our lives so full of bliss

XCIII THE DEDICATED LIFE (I P 1368 Nako sodū anna)

Ah, wherefore fast or wherefore go
To solitude apart?

Whether thou joy or sorrow know Have God within thy heart

If in his mother's arms he be
The child knows nought amiss.
Cast out, yea, cast out utterly
All other thought than this

Love not the world nor yet forsake
Its gifts in fear and hate
Thy life to God an offering make
And to him dedicate

Nay, Tukā says, ask not again, Waking old doubts anew Whatever else is taught by men, None other word is true

² Dark as clouds, that is, Krisna, called here Meghasama.

XCIV. THE INWARD PURPOSE

(IP 260 Dharma rakşāvayāsāthī)

To keep the Holy Order pure,— This ever is my purpose sure.

The Vedic statutes I proclaim; To imitate the saints my aim

For, with no firm resolve within, To quit the world is deadly sin

Vile he who does so, Tukā says,— Evil the worship that he pays

XCV THE BHAKTA'S TASK

(I P 520 Ahmi Vaikuntharasi)

When from Vaikuntha² forth we came
This of our coming was the aim—
That what the sages taught we by our lives proclaim

Since filled the world with sedge and weed, To sweep the paths our lowly meed, Trod by the saints, and on their sacred scraps' to feed.

Gone the old wisdom, and instead Mere words that wide have ruin spread. Lustful men's minds, the way to God quite vanished

Beat we the drum of Love, whose din Brings terror to this age of sin Hail, Tukā bids, with joy the victors we win.

XCVI MĀYĀ

(I P 300 Mrigajalā kāja karāzā utāra)

If the river be a mirage that I see Then what need for me Of a ford?

¹ The Hely Order, the Dharma, the divine society held together by religious law and by the system of caste. Cf. Note on p. 35 above. ² Varhuntha, the heaven of Vistu

Sacred scraps, the remains of the sacrifice, or sacred meal, which are consumed by the worshipper or the ministrant,

If the children buy and sell in make-believe, Who should joy or grieve, Gain or lose?

Are not maidens still in kinship just the same, Though they wedded in a game, Girl with girl?

Joy or sorrow that we meet with in our dreams To us waking seems Nothing real

So, says Tukā, births and dying,—nought is true Bondage, freedom too, Weary me

XCVII "THE WORLD PASSETH AWAY"

(I P 2811 Gele paläle divasa roza)

Who dares call aught his own As swiftly speed the days? Time keeps the fatal score, And not a moment strays

Hair, ears, and eyes grow old,
As, dullard, grow they must,
The best is nigh thee, yet
Thou fill'st thy mouth with dust

Dying and yet thou buildst As for eternity! Nay, haste to Pāndurang! 'Tis Tukā says it flee!

XCVIII THE WAY OF DEATH
(IP 1562 Eka pāhātasā ekācī dahane)

Ah, friend, beware, see how they bear The dead men to the ghaut ¹ To God on high with agony Call and cease not

¹ The ghaut, the burning ghaut where the bodies of the dead are cremated,

Though 'mong the dead not numbered, Within thy scrip is death Fill up, fill up with good thy cup, While thou hast breath

List what I say,—the narrow way
Is dense with dying men;
'Mong them at last thy lot is cast.
No succour then

XCIX "THE NIGHT COMETH"

(IP 2693. Nene japatapa anusthāna yāga)

Lo, Death draws nigh; and what know I
Of rite, or vow, or prayer?
To God alone who guards his own
I flee and hide me there

The tally's' score grows more and more,—
Then night and all is done
Hear Tukā say,—dear every day
From that grim robber won

C. 'TIS ALL FOR NAUGHT

(Căturyăce yoge kazıtra karītī)

With whatso skill he may his verse refine, 'Tis all for naught without the breath divine

Let him put on the holy beggar's dress, 'Tis all for naught without unworldliness

He paints the sun or moon upon a wall, 'Tis all for naught without the light of all.

O, he may play, of course, a soldier's part, 'Tis all for naught without a warrior heart

So, Tukā says, they've danced and songs they've sung, 'Tis naught without the love of Pandurang

² The tally In counting it is often the custom in India to put aside a piece of wood or other article for each quantity counted, so as to keep the score

CI THE DIVINE INSPIRATION
(I P 2949 Āpuhyā bole)

'Tis not I who speak so featly,
All my words my Lover's are
Hark, Sālunki singing sweetly,
Taught, as I, by One afar
How could I, abject, achieve it?
'Tis the all-upholding One
Deep his skill, who can conceive it?
He can make the lame to run

CII DROWNING MEN
(IP 948 Upakārāsāthī bolo he upāya)

For men's saving I make known These devices—this alone My desire Can my heart unmoved be When before my eyes I see Drowning men?

I shall see them with my eyes When their plight they realise At the last

CIII WITHOUT AND WITHIN (I.P. 2869 Ali sunhasthparvani)

Soon as the season of Simhasth² comes in,
The barber and the priest—what wealth they win I
Thousands of sins may lurk within his heart,
If only he will shave his head and chin!
What is shaved off is gone, but what else, pray?
What sign that sin is gone? His evil way
Is still unchanged Yea, without faith and love
All is but vanity, I, Tukā, say

² Solunki, a common Indian bird, gracula religiosa
³ The season of Suithasth, the period during which

The season of Sinhasth, the period during which the planet Jupiter is in the constellation Leo "The period is considered favourable for the washing away of sins, and Hindus go to holy places, such as Nasik, shave their heads and moustaches and bathe in the river"—Bhandarkar's Vaisnavism, p 94, Note

CIV "AND HAVE NOT CHARITY" (I.P 90. Tila jälile tändula)

Your heart from rage and lust has nowise turned For all the rice and sesamum' you've burned. You've toiled for naught with learned words whose fruit Is vain display—and Pandurang you've spurned

By pilgrimage and grim austerity Only your pride has grown, your "I" and "me" Swell with your alms, the secret, Tuka says, You've missed your acts are sinful utterly

CV. THE MENDICANT (I P 679 Āšābaddha vaktā)

Lust binds the preacher, fear The doubting hearts of those his words who hear.

He knows not what he sings His mouth he opes for what each comer brings

A greedy cat, he steals From door to door, begging from men his meals.

What Tukā says is true, The sack is empty and the measure³ too

CVI THE PROUD ADVAITIST (I P 1471 Naikāve kāni)

To such pay thou no heed the words he saith Are only chaff, empty of loving faith He praises high Advant which only brings To speaker and to hearer pain and scaithe.

1 Rice and seson um, offerings given to gods

2 Your "I" and "me" See Note on p. 45 above The measure is a vessel by means of which grain is measured from the heap into the sack

The saints are the adherents of the bhakts doctrine, which is not, of course, montage

Advant, the doctrine of the identity of the individual soul and the Supreme Soul, which is expressed in the Sanscrit phrase, "Brahmami," "I am Brahm "

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